United Nations A/50/PV.83

General Assembly
Fiftieth Session

Official Records

83rd plenary meeting
Thursday, 7 December 1995, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral ..... (Portugal)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Agenda item 161

Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/670)

The President: I should like to inform the Assembly that the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, on behalf of the Western European and Other States, in a letter dated 5 December 1995, requests that the General Assembly hear in plenary meeting a statement by the Observer of the Holy See during the debate on agenda item 161.

Members will recall that in accordance with established practice of the General Assembly, Observer non-Member States may normally make statements only in the Main Committees. However, taking into account the importance attached to the issues under discussion, it is proposed that the General Assembly should take a decision on that request.

May I take it that there is no objection to the proposal to hear the Observer of the Holy See in the course of the debate on agenda item 161?

It was so decided.

Mr. Laclaustra (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania and the Slovak Republic associate themselves with this statement.

Last March, in Copenhagen, Heads of State and Government gathered

> "to recognize the significance of social development and human well-being for all and to give to these goals the highest priority both now and into the twenty-first century." *(A/CONF.166/9, Chap. I, annex I, para. 1)*

The World Summit for Social Development displayed a common political commitment to place people at the centre of development, which the European Union supports strongly.

The outcome of the World Summit for Social Development represents a political commitment, at the highest level, to pursue integrated social-development strategies. In this regard, the eradication of poverty and the promotion of full employment, social integration, and an environment conducive to social development are priority goals. These issues affect all countries, both developed and developing.

A common agreement was reached in Copenhagen aimed at creating an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment, based on democracy, full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, equality between men and women, the elimination of all forms of discrimination, solidarity, transparent and accountable

95-86945 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

governance and administration, and the encouragement of partnership with free and representative organizations of civil society.

Furthermore, the Fourth World Conference on Women, held recently in Beijing, continued the Copenhagen process and provided the necessary framework for integrating gender perspectives in all the strategies to be developed for implementing the Programme of Action adopted at the Summit.

We gather again today in the General Assembly, at a time when the Organization is involved in an important reform process, to welcome and strongly endorse the result of the World Summit for Social Development, to continue our exchange of views about questions related to its follow-up and to adopt the necessary decisions to support the effective implementation of the commitments made at the Summit.

At the Summit it was rightly emphasized that an integrated approach to social development is necessary for implementing the Summit's Programme of Action at the national level, and this integrated approach should also be taken into account in its follow-up.

The implementation of the Programme of Action is to take place primarily at the national level and is primarily the responsibility of Governments. In Copenhagen, all countries committed themselves at the highest political level to formulate or strengthen, by 1996, national strategies for social development. In order to do so, international cooperation is necessary, particularly through technical assistance in the formulation of these strategies, to evaluate at the national level progress made in implementing the outcome of the Summit and to develop more refined concepts and programmes for the collection and dissemination of statistics and indicators of social development. The relevant United Nations programmes and agencies, as well as bilateral and multilateral agencies, can play an important role in supporting the implementation of these national strategies for social development in the field.

The Summit placed special emphasis on the involvement of civil society in the implementation of and follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Summit on the basis of a spirit of partnership and cooperation. The Summit also stressed the need for strengthening the organizations of civil society in order to enable them to participate constructively in the making, implementation and evaluation of policies. We attach special importance to this matter and appeal to Governments to maintain and enhance effective partnership with the main actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the social factions.

Implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action will require the mobilization of financial resources at the national and international level. Ways and means of effectively mobilizing financial resources for social development, in both the public and private sectors, and providing a more suitable orientation of development assistance and cooperation towards this goal need to be fully explored. Efforts aimed at substantially reducing the debt burden of the poorest and most heavily indebted countries and at ensuring that their structural-adjustment programmes include social development goals need to be pursued.

As stated in the Programme of Action, the Economic and Social Council should consider new and innovative ideas for generating funds for the implementation of the outcome of the Summit and should offer useful suggestions to that end.

The Programme of Action of the Social Summit recalled — and the European Union reaffirmed its commitment in this regard — the need to strive for the fulfilment of the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product for overall official development assistance, as soon as possible. In this context, special priority should be given to Africa, the least developed countries and other low-income countries. The Programme of Action also identified the need for recipient countries to strengthen their national coordination mechanisms for international cooperation in the field of social development and to ensure the effective use of international assistance. Furthermore, the Programme of Action requests interested developed and developing countries to allocate an average of 20 per cent of official development assistance and 20 per cent of their national budgets, respectively, to basic social programmes.

In this connection, we welcome the Norwegian proposal to host in 1996 a meeting of interested countries and representatives of relevant international institutions to consider how the developed and developing countries can, in partnership, apply operationally the 20/20 initiative and discuss the definition of "basic social services".

International financial institutions would also contribute to the mobilization of resources by integrating social-development goals in their policies, programmes and operations. In this respect, we hope that the international financial institutions will be able to provide information to the Economic and Social Council on measures taken in connection with the recommendations of the World Summit. In addition, closer cooperation, particularly in the field, is necessary between the United Nations development system and the international financial institutions, in order to promote greater complementarity.

In this regard, the Secretary-General should consider the possibility of holding meetings with the heads of the Bretton Woods institutions, United Nations funds and programmes, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and of other relevant agencies for the purpose of considering the implementation of the results of the Social Summit.

Within the United Nations system, as stated in the Copenhagen Programme of Action:

> "A framework for international cooperation must be developed in the context of the agenda for development in order to ensure the integrated and comprehensive implementation, follow-up and assessment of the outcome of the Summit, together with the results of other recent and planned United Nations Conferences related to social development" *(A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, annex I, para. 94)*

At the intergovernmental level, special consideration should be given to the key functions of the General Assembly, as the principal policy-making organ on matters relating to the follow-up to the Summit, and of the Economic and Social Council, in providing general guidelines and taking responsibility for system-wide United Nations coordination in activities related to the Summit. In this effort, the Commission for Social Development should play a central role in assisting the Economic and Social Council in its coordinating functions.

To this end, the Economic and Social Council, on the basis of a proposal made by the Commission, should establish a multi-year programme of work for the Commission until the year 2000. This programme should take into account the Summit's comprehensive and integrated approach to social development and should identify fundamental topics of the core issues of the Programme of Action. We recall in this connection that the European Union has already presented to the Economic and Social Council a proposal for a multi-year programme of work for the Commission for Social Development. This proposal is attached to the copies of this statement that have been distributed.

In this respect, the support and participation of the main actors of civil society is essential. Mechanisms are therefore needed to promote, support and make possible the effective participation of civil society in the work of the Commission for Social Development.

For the Social Summit to be effective, we consider that an improved United Nations reporting system is crucial. To that end, and on the basis, *inter alia*, of the recommendations of the Commission for Social Development, the Economic and Social Council should review the reporting system in the area of social development with a view to establishing a coherent and integrated system that would result in clear policy recommendations for Goverr nents and international actors.

The European Union also considers it especially important that all relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system should be involved in the follow-up to the Social Summit and encourages specialized agencies and relevant organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen and adjust their activities, programmes and medium-term strategies to take into account the follow-up to the Summit. The ILO, because of its mandate, tripartite structure and experience, has a special role to play in the field of employment and social development. The United Nations Development Programme, because of its experience in the field of poverty, also has a special role to play in promoting efforts of the United Nations system to strengthen institutional capacities and in supporting the coordination of social-development programmes through the resident-coordinator system.

It is necessary for the relevant intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations to receive, through the Secretary-General, full information on a regular basis on the work undertaken by inter-agency mechanisms for the follow-up to the Summit.

The Copenhagen Programme of Action invites the Administrative Committee on Coordination to bring system-wide coordination issues to the attention of the Economic and Social Council and to make recommendations thereon. In this context, we note with satisfaction the establishment of the new task forces to

address the enabling environment for social and economic development, employment and sustainable livelihoods and the provision of basic social services for all.

The involvement of the Bretton Woods institutions in the follow-up to the Social Summit and their enhanced cooperation with the relevant parts of the United Nations system are essential. The role of the World Bank as lead agency for the task force on the enabling environment for social and economic development certainly augurs well for movement in that direction.

We committed ourselves in Copenhagen to cooperation for social development at all levels in a spirit of partnership. To this end, regional follow-up to pursue such mechanisms and monitor progress is necessary. In this context, we welcome the Austrian initiative, at the Copenhagen Summit, to host a first regional follow-up meeting in 1997. Furthermore, within the European Union, a meeting of experts was held in Madrid in late November, called "After Copenhagen: actions to combat exclusion". That meeting constitutes an important starting-point for follow-up activities both at the national level and within the framework of the European Union.

When we talk in the General Assembly of promoting employment, strengthening social integration or reducing poverty, we do not mean only in terms of human rights and social justice, but also, in a broad sense, of solidarity. Solidarity has many dimensions: within each country, between different social groups, between men and women and between generations; and at a global level, between members of the international community. Solidarity goes beyond actions by Governments and politicians and requires the active participation of all members of society. On the basis of this concept of solidarity, the European Union seeks to strike a balance between economic growth and social policy. In maintaining this balance that integrates social and economic policies while ensuring an adequate level of social protection, the creation of employment will be our top priority.

The political momentum generated by the World Summit for Social Development should be maintained. The European Union is firmly committed to that goal and we will support initiatives aimed at the full implementation of the Programme for Action adopted in Copenhagen and its follow-up.

The President: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at 12 noon.

It was so decided.

I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

Mr. Nielson (Denmark): The Social Summit represented a milestone in the history of international cooperation. It created an unprecedented platform for global social development. It confirmed that all people have a right to a decent life.

Economic activities, through which individuals express their initiative and creativity and which enhance the wealth of communities, are a fundamental basis for social progress. But social progress will not be realized simply through the free interaction of market forces. Public policies are necessary to correct market failures, to complement market mechanisms, to maintain social stability and to create a national and international economic environment that promotes sustainable growth on a global scale. Such growth should promote equity and social justice, tolerance, responsibility and involvement. These principles constitute the backbone of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action. They confirm that a truly global conscience is now emerging.

The implementation of the recommendations is the immediate and direct responsibility of national Governments. In shouldering their task, national Governments will need the full support of many different actors inside and outside their national borders. The United Nations system bears a particular responsibility in providing this support. We need improved and strengthened cooperation for social development in a spirit of partnership, through the United Nations and other multilateral institutions.

This will require effectiveness in development work, and it will require strong coordination of the overall implementation of the Declaration and the Programme of Action. Effectiveness and coordination are the dual challenges for the United Nations system. But implementation of the Programme of Action, especially in Africa and in the least developed countries, will also require additional financial resources.

The follow-up process must be innovative and concrete and must lead to practical results. Attaining the goals identified at the Summit cuts across all sectors and policy areas. Intellectual cross-fertilization and stimulation to the benefit of future discussions on social development issues are needed. This stimulation should preferably be independent of the United Nations

system but should also, naturally, be complementary to United Nations efforts.

Such a stimulation process should not in any way interfere with intergovernmental negotiations, nor with the ongoing work of international organizations. It should fully respect such measures for an integrated and comprehensive follow-up as the General Assembly might decide on. The independent process should be seen exclusively as a support for the national and intergovernmental implementation process.

To provide a firm structure for the process, one approach would be to establish an independent forum on social development. We have consulted several other countries on this idea. I wish to thank those Member States that have expressed their support. From the outset, we made it clear that to serve its purpose, the forum would need consensus in terms of political backing, as well as broad support in terms of financing its activities. From the consultations we have had, I have to draw the conclusion that these preconditions will not be met. As a consequence, I do not think it appropriate to pursue the idea as originally developed. On the other hand, we must not let ourselves be limited by what seems possible. We have to do what is necessary. Therefore, we are considering alternative approaches and ideas with a view to attaining the goals intended by establishing the forum.

As one example, Denmark has initiated a research project on the possibilities of international statistical follow-up to the Programme of Action adopted in Copenhagen. The report analyzes the Programme of Action with a view to defining the exact areas where social development is intended. In addition, the report describes already available statistics and their utility.

The report complements the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Statistical Commission, which will analyse and define data gaps in available statistics. The project will also supplement the efforts of the Economic and Social Council concerning a general analysis of the decisions taken at the six world conferences held since 1990, including the Social Summit.

The current data map of the world has many white and grey spots. In areas such as disability, morbidity, causes of death, poverty, underemployment, employment in the informal sector, homelessness and social security, statistics are either non-existent or not up to date, or else their coverage and quality are low. The report I have mentioned is available to interested delegates.

In addition to the project just mentioned, it is Denmark's intention to support multilateral efforts and the efforts of our development partners to enhance the statistical foundation for assessing future social progress. It is also our intention, in line with the thinking behind the forum, to convene in Copenhagen international high-quality seminars on selected social development issues, directly aimed at maintaining the spirit of political commitment and action that prevailed in Copenhagen. To ensure the dynamics and continuity of the seminars, we will set up a small secretariat to prepare them.

The representative of Spain, on behalf of the European Union, has already commented on the report of the Secretary-General on follow-up to the Summit. It goes without saying that I fully associate myself with his statement.

The Summit placed firmly on the international agenda a number of key issues and problems that had been considered until then to be internal national concerns. This breakthrough created an exceptional opportunity to combine strategies that are both national and international in scope in our pursuit of social development. It is the responsibility of the General Assembly to ensure that the vision of our Heads of State and Government comes true. We must face the challenge with determination and imagination. It is our responsibility to ensure that the Copenhagen spirit continues and develops into decisive action on all fronts.

Mr. Tello (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action, adopted at the World Summit for Social Development in March this year in Denmark, clearly demonstrated the global nature of old and new social challenges. In developed and developing countries alike, situations that engender social tensions continue to arise. Millions of people live in poverty; the number of unemployed is on the rise; and the problem of marginalized sectors of society will not go away.

The World Summit for Social Development marked the beginning of a new stage in social development. The documents adopted at the end of the Summit bear witness to the international community's awareness of the need to adopt urgent measures to solve the world's social problems. These documents identify strategies, policies and priority measures to be adopted at the national, regional and international levels in order to meet the aspirations of all countries in the sphere of social development and to develop an international awareness of

the importance of balancing economic efficiency with social justice. They clearly affirm that the primary responsibility for progress in social development must be assumed at the national level. They also recognize the necessity of international cooperation in support of national policies.

The actions and decisions we adopt to implement the commitments we undertook in Copenhagen must reflect the global approach of the Declaration and Programme of Action. This approach integrates social questions and economic ones and addresses social development from the political and cultural perspective, placing it at the centre of national priorities and the international agenda. The approach recognizes that there is a direct relation between the promotion of equal opportunity, economic growth and the international economic context. It stresses that only a favourable economic environment will establish conditions conducive to addressing social problems. Undoubtedly, equality requires resource-generating growth together with a minimum of socio-political stability.

The Copenhagen Summit made it clear that the State is responsible not only for generating economic development but also for promoting social justice. In this context, it was recognized that the participation and mobilization of civil society, rooted in broad collective solidarity, are essential. We are convinced that the participation of civil society is indispensable for ensuring the efficacy of any social development policy.

The United Nations must lend significant support to countries' efforts to translate the outcome of the Summit into concrete national policies and programmes. The efforts made to date to ensure adequate coordination of action between the bodies of the system that are concerned will certainly improve the effectiveness of their work.

Through the various competent bodies of the Organization — the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development — it will be important to monitor carefully the implementation of the commitments of the Summit and to define the direction of policies in this area. The sharing of national experiences will facilitate the identification of specific areas in which international cooperation needs to be strengthened. The documentation which the Secretariat submits for consideration to the competent organs must contain specific suggestions, based on a thorough analysis of actions undertaken at all levels, if the follow-up to the Summit is to be effective. We are aware that the part of the Secretariat entrusted with the responsibility of preparing the documents will need to be strengthened.

In his report, the Secretary-General asserts that regional activities to implement the outcome of the Summit are of particular importance. In this context, I wish to inform the Assembly that the Ministers in charge of social development policies of the States members of the Rio Group met in Buenos Aires last May and adopted a declaration on follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development. The commitments assumed by our Governments on that occasion will give decisive momentum to our action in this area.

We completely agree with the statement in the Secretary-General's report that the follow-up to and implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted by the Social Summit are particularly challenging owing to the complex and interconnected nature of the issues and the commitments made. We must therefore work systematically towards the attainment of the goals that we have set. On this occasion I should like to reiterate the firm support of the Government of Mexico for progress in the implementation of the commitments undertaken at the Summit for Social Development. In this way we shall achieve the objectives that gave rise to our Organization.

Mr. Somavía (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Today the General Assembly is dealing with the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. We have reason for satisfaction as we undertake the task of ensuring that the United Nations system contributes to the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken there.

For the first time in the history of mankind, Heads of State and Government met to decide, forcefully and clearly, that the main responsibility in all our societies is to improve the living standards of people, particularly the dispossessed and the excluded. This task, which is primarily national in character, requires a revitalized framework for international cooperation and participation by civil society.

This great international consensus is a political and ethical response to the uncertainties and insecurities which we are experiencing in this new world of post-cold-war globalization.

The message of the Social Summit is very simple: if we want to have stable societies, we need more equity and greater respect for the environment. A mere linear projection of the present trends in the growth of poverty, unemployment and social polarization indicates that there will be further social tension and unrest in spite of the

considerable achievements in many countries. The logic of the prevailing economic system accentuates the processes of social exclusion.

For many people it is a cruel irony to talk about democracy, human rights and the expansion of markets when they do not see any real improvement in their living conditions. On the contrary, the Social Summit is a cry of alarm. It is a political vision of a world at peace with itself, a possible and morally necessary ideal. The Summit has given us a modern vision of how the status quo might be changed on the basis of the following principles.

First, there is an urgent need to develop a concept of security that takes account of the problems of uncertainty and insecurity in the lives of individuals, their families and the communities in which they live. The security of the citizen is more important than the security of the State.

Second, all countries — from the most advanced to the poorest societies — are facing social problems of various kinds. The social crisis is a global phenomenon. Although it is undoubtedly more dramatic in the least developed countries, it affects everybody. Consequently, no one should try to lecture to other people; it is much better to share ideas. The Programme of Action is a summary of policies that have yielded positive results in various parts of the world.

Third, there are no stable societies based on social inequality. The experience of history demonstrates, on the contrary, that all societies that are today considered to be developed achieved this "status" by gradually incorporating the concept of equity in their development processes. The Social Summit, together with other United Nations conferences that have taken place in the current decade, are opening the way to the major challenge of the twenty-first century — the fight for equity. This includes equity in the distribution of the benefits of development, equity between generations, equity in the sense of gender equality, equity in terms of respect for the environment, and equity and non-discrimination in the face of ethnic, religious and cultural diversity and in respect of minorities. In a word, development and the quality of a society are measured not in terms of how the wealthy live but in terms of how the poor live.

Fourth, the steady creation of wealth is a condition for the equitable distribution of the benefits of well-being. This requires a modern balance between the complementary but different functions of the State, of the market and of social organization. We have learned, painfully, that when the market is left to its own dynamics it excludes the weakest. We have learned that, without democratic control, the State becomes oppressive and that, without the rules of coexistence, society resorts to violence and force for the resolution of conflicts.

Fifth, there can be no sustainable social development in unstable economies. The solution of social problems only through the politics of well-being leads to populism. Equally, the necessary quest for a healthy economy and for macroeconomic balance must be accompanied by attention to macrosocial balance. President Frei has pointed out that we are in transition between the well-known concept of a State of well-being and the integrated vision of a State of equity. This is an imaginative, promotive, contemporary and fair State that respects economic, political and social balance and makes room for individual and collective creativity in society. Hence, the policies of structural adjustment mean that the costs of adjustment fall on the strongest sectors of a country, and not on the weakest. Otherwise, social conflicts can only worsen.

Sixth, there is no lack of resources for dealing with these problems. If we combine the public and private financial resources available throughout the world, they are more than sufficient. What is lacking is their focus on the priorities set by the World Summit for Social Development. This means more efficient public expenditure and more socially effective private investment. One important challenge facing us is making the investment of private resources in the solution to social problems good business and modernizing public policies so as to stimulate creativity and innovation in weaker sectors, thereby helping to satisfy their needs.

Seventh, there can be no sustained solution to social problems without intense international cooperation, particularly for the benefit of the least developed countries. The World Summit recognized for the first time in a United Nations context the need to consider debt cancellation for Africa and the least developed countries and suggested acceptance of the 20/20 initiative by countries which are willing to do so. The World Summit noted that multilateral debts require an innovative approach and that such United Nations programmes as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund require resources that match current needs. The World Summit provided a global consensus within which both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank can play their part in implementing the

10 Commitments of the Heads of State and Government. Also, for the first time, at this high level there was systematic recognition that the special needs of countries with economies in transition must be taken into account at the international level.

Eighth, all the policies proposed in the Programme of Action converge toward a central idea, namely, the training of individuals to improve skills, which lies at the very heart of social reform. Education and health, training, the organization of civil society, structures for community participation, national and regional efforts, all these must be viewed as socially productive investments, not as unproductive social expenditures. We must invest in people, especially in women, and this investment is the most profitable a society can make.

Ninth, and lastly, I should like to highlight one dimension of the World Summit which I view as particularly significant. I am talking about recognizing the fact that human needs are not only material but also spiritual. In the heart of every human being exist values and ideals that must be satisfied. This is the moral backbone of any society, just as it is the foundation for confronting one of the main evils of contemporary life: a lack of meaning, a feeling of emptiness, the tendency to be morally indifferent to the problems and sufferings of others. With the necessary motivation, each and every one of us can make a larger and better contribution to improving human relations and find various ways of serving the community. These are necessary steps that must be taken if we are to transform fear for the future into a window of opportunity as we enter the twenty-first century.

The important question that all this raises is: how can we make this vision of a better society a reality? The draft resolution before us, which Chile fully supports, effectively establishes the various levels of intergovernmental responsibility.

The implementation of the 10 Commitments can only be approached as a major historical process in which the World Summit is both a starting-point for and part of the process. It is a starting-point, as were the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the environment, the 1974 Bucharest Conference on population and the 1975 Mexico Conference on women, but it is also part of one of the most creative processes within the experience of the United Nations. From the beginning of this decade, various Conferences, starting with the 1990 World Summit for Children and including the Habitat II Conference of 1996, the Organization has been defining in contemporary terms the major challenges we shall be facing in the twenty-first century.

To those who enjoy pointing out United Nations inefficiency and who would like to eliminate major conferences, I would venture to reply that there is no other national or multilateral process in which such a high level of consensus has been achieved regarding the steps we can take, the nature of the problems facing us and the policies needed to deal with them. This was clearly recognized in the excellent Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary. The major conferences some people would like to eliminate are an example of intellectual creativity and demonstrations of political skill in achieving agreements at a most reasonable cost — I would repeat this: at a most reasonable cost. For example, the World Summit for Social Development cost $2.5 million out of the regular United Nations budget. That represents the cost of half a day's peace-keeping operations in former Yugoslavia. Many of us are quite prepared to debate the relative efficiency of those two undertakings.

Lastly, I should like to refer to the commitment of the World Summit to eradicating absolute poverty by a given date in each country. I believe that with the passing of time that commitment will take on a historic significance. It represents the first time that the international community has recognized that poverty need not exist as a social institution and that it has made each society responsible for deciding when and how it can be eradicated, with international cooperation.

Why not make 1996 — the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty — the year in which we forge ahead towards this goal? Why not make the effort, in each and every one of our countries, to set a date in the course of that year for the eradication of absolute poverty, something to which we committed ourselves at Copenhagen.

By eradicating poverty we shall in a sense be working towards all the goals of all the United Nations Conferences convened in the 1990s — conferences on children, the environment, human rights, population, social development, women, Habitat. In addition, we know that employment is an initial step towards the elimination of poverty.

Poverty eradication is, moreover, a goal in which non-governmental organizations and civil society as a whole can find a common task that can lead to a great

international social movement and — why not think boldly — even to a summit meeting of civil society, a summit at which social movements, trade unions, political parties, spiritual and religious movements and the whole rich gamut of non-governmental organizations, which have had so much influence at United Nations conferences, could all come together and become a prime moving force to energize the efforts to eliminate poverty.

Such a meeting could also go into the shortcomings of the World Summit with regard to structural changes in the world economy and the financing of democracy to facilitate the implementation of the 10 Commitments.

Allow me to close by saying a few words as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit. These are words of thanks.

Our thanks go first of all to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who from the time of his election gave unceasing support to the Summit. We are also grateful for the efficient support of the Secretariat staff, in particular Mr. Nitin Desai and Mr. Jacques Baudot, who worked with us on the conference. I want especially to highlight the speed with which the United Nations system set up the three task forces to ensure integrated follow-up for the Summit and the decisions of the United Nations Development Programme and the International Labour Organization according priority in their work to these commitments regarding poverty and employment.

We wish finally to thank Denmark, whose Minister of Development Cooperation we are honoured to have among us today, for its important contribution to the success of the Summit and for the ongoing support from its Government and its principal representatives.

But above all, fellow representatives, I want to thank all of you in this Hall and all who came from your capitals to take part in the preparatory process. I am absolutely convinced that the Summit would not have been a success without the personal commitment of the diplomats who negotiated the agreements. I myself saw the creation of a spirit of responsibility and good will in which to think of those who live in poverty, those who are unemployed, and those who are the victims of social disintegration. I saw how participants drew on their own personal ideals and values, above and beyond their responsibility to represent national positions, for inspiration in this shared undertaking. On the path to Copenhagen I met, among diplomats and the representatives of the public at large, committed human beings; they were the real authors of the Summit. I saw spiritual wealth, professional seriousness-mindedness and a growing conviction that the Social Summit was an opportunity we could not afford to miss.

As the General Assembly, in this great Hall, considers the results of the Social Summit, I want to pay a plain, human tribute to all representatives, Missions and other participants: a tribute to what we are capable of achieving when we believe in what we are doing. Many thanks to you all; I will never forget what you have achieved.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): I welcome this opportunity to set out how Canada views the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. This is also the right occasion to speak to the role of the United Nations in the implementation of the Programme of Action. Since this is the first time the General Assembly has considered the Summit since the Copenhagen event, I wish to start by expressing our appreciation to Denmark for hosting the Summit, to the Danish Minister of Development Cooperation, and, of course, to Ambassador Somavia, for the passion and imagination — and, as we heard this morning, the eloquence — he brought to the whole process.

The Summit took a comprehensive approach to social development. It expressed a people-centred vision of sustainable development in which economic, social and environmental objectives are interwoven for the purpose of improving the well-being of people. Beyond the fine words, what is new here is the idea of individual economic and social security, which is emerging as an increasingly important factor in world affairs. From that comes a renewed focus on human development, both in domestic public policy and in international cooperation.

The Social Summit's approach to enablement and empowerment merits mention. Copenhagen recognized that at the heart of policies to enable social development are democratic institutions, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and respect for cultural diversity. This shows a profound understanding that these are policies that foster personal well-being and social and political inclusiveness. The emphasis on empowerment and participation of individuals and communities reflects the conviction that people should be able to participate fully in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. Development must be by people, not only for them. Gender equality is central to this.

It is worth referring also to the principles and values which suffuse the Declaration and Programme of Action — notably solidarity, partnership and mutual respect — as well as to the ethical underpinning of the key commitments made by our Heads of State. These principles, if implemented, offer an appropriate basis for national harmony, as well as for international cooperation in a world where interdependence is deepening at all levels.

High-minded declarations of intent often engender scepticism, especially when not tied to concrete action. The acid test for our publics will indeed be the follow-up. In planning for that, it is worth keeping in mind the new elements that Copenhagen brought forward in the international approach to social development.

A key point is the universal relevance of the issues addressed by the Social Summit. Poverty is a main concern, but the approach is not North-South. The reality is that all our countries are grappling in different ways with the central Summit themes: the reduction of poverty, the creation of employment, and the building of social cohesion.

While national responsibilities are paramount, we must not neglect the global context. We live at a time when people are being integrated into a global economy and culture. Traditional forms of solidarity, such as the extended family, as well as more modern forms of social protection, are changing as the roles of the family and the State change. Many countries are flourishing in the new economic context. However, severe problems of unemployment, poverty and income distribution have grown worse in many places, contributing to political instability, mass migration, environmental stress, and ethnic conflict.

(*Spoke in English*)

The Social Summit should be situated in the wider context of the current series of major United Nations international conferences that runs from Rio to Istanbul. Taken together, these conferences articulate a comprehensive vision of sustainable development. Canada believes that the coherent and coordinated implementation of the conclusions of these conferences should be the principal vocation of the United Nations system in the economic and social fields.

Given the inevitable overlap of issues among conferences, a thematic approach to follow-up is the only practical way forward. This is why we were pleased by the decision of the Secretary-General to establish three inter-agency task forces organized around the following key themes: the enabling environment for social and economic development, the meeting of basic needs; and sustainable livelihoods. We are especially pleased to note the close cooperation with the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO) envisaged in these coordination arrangements. Goal-oriented, practical cooperation between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, and with specialized agencies, is the best way to secure the closer partnership that is often called for. We encourage the Secretary-General to proceed with establishing a fourth task force, on the empowerment and advancement of women, to support sustained follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action. Of course, this would not diminish in any way the need for the other task forces to build the gender and sustainability dimensions into their work.

We know that the United Nations funds and programmes have already taken steps to put social development goals in general and the follow-up to Copenhagen in particular at the core of their work. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) can make a particular contribution in facilitating the system-wide effort by drawing upon its extensive field network to support coordinated programming and by helping to build national capacity to tackle poverty and other key Copenhagen commitments. We should acknowledge the leadership shown by Gus Speth in all these respects.

Canada also envisages a meaningful role for a revitalized Commission for Social Development in the follow-up to the Social Summit. We think there is room for a policy-oriented body to shed further light on how to attain the agreed goals. Accordingly, at its special session the Commission should give the highest priority to the formulation of a multi-year thematic work programme which reflects the Copenhagen framework. This work programme should recognize the important interrelationships between the core themes of the summit: poverty, employment and social integration. The Commission should also: adapt its mandate in order to ensure an integrated approach to social development; integrate the current sectoral issues on its agenda into the multi-year thematic programme of work; review and update its methods of work; seek creative ways of involving in its work independent experts and representatives of civil society.

We also continue to see an important role for the Economic and Social Council in harmonizing the work

programmes of the Commission with others, as well as in providing policy coordination.

The Social Summit drew important commitments from all of us. It provides a basis for restoring social concerns to the heart of economic policy formulation. Through, for example, the idea of 20/20 compacts, it set out concrete ideas of how to direct more resources to poverty reduction and related objectives. In this respect, Canada has undertaken to provide 25 per cent of its official development assistance to meeting basic needs.

The 20/20 commitment is one example of how the Summit creatively envisaged constructive partnerships. We look forward to working closely with others to identify other creative ways for encouraging the implementation of the Summit outcomes. In so doing we will be mindful of the broader requirement for us all: to give substance to the undertaking made at Copenhagen — to put people first.

Mr. Guillén (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Last March we attended the conference in Copenhagen. Together, we decided on priorities and goals, and the Social Summit formulated a consensus strategy that generated the political will indispensable to the promotion of the human dimension of development as a priority objective, in particular in order to overcome poverty, increase productive employment and bring about social integration.

Today we are meeting to evaluate the implementation of the Copenhagen agreements in order to work constructively together in this process.

In our Organization, my delegation has always supported the specific responsibilities in the area of follow-up assigned to the Economic and Social Council, and in particular to its Commission for Social Development. Once again, starting in 1996, Peru will be a member of that Commission.

At the same time, we think it is extremely important to participate in the work of the international financial institutions. Their recommendations and their guidelines have a direct impact on social problems.

Peru attributes great importance to Denmark's idea — formulated by Minister Poul Nielson, Minister for Development Cooperation, who is here — to establish an independent forum for development, made up of eminent persons. Peru will be following with great interest whatever options Denmark suggests to follow up the commitments made at Copenhagen. We shall do so because of Denmark's clear-sightedness and generosity in the area of social cooperation, which have always been an example to be followed in the United Nations.

On their own initiative, the countries of Latin America established follow-up and coordination machinery for social policies, and the Rio Group has convened for 1996 an international conference on the eradication of poverty and discrimination.

The agreements reached in Copenhagen are a kind of practical guide of enormous importance for States. Primary responsibility for the implementation of the agreements rests, after all, with the individual countries. The present situation in Peru not only is entirely consistent with the Copenhagen agreements, but also falls very particularly within the framework provided by those agreements. Peru, at one and the same time, is carrying out a programme of structural adjustment and a programme of social support. We are doing this with our own resources, which are not inflationary. We are counting on receiving material and intellectual assistance from the international financial institutions of the United Nations, and the bilateral cooperation of those countries that are committed to Peru's economic development.

In this connection, our country presented a document on stabilization, economic reforms and social programmes in Peru to 11 developed countries and 13 international organizations that are members of the Consultative Group of the World Bank or the donor group which met in Paris on 24 and 25 October last. This document gives details on the efforts that we are making and the medium-term prospects in my country. On that occasion, representatives agreed to provide resources in the amount of $940 million which would be targeted to reduce poverty, with emphasis on the development of programmes of health, education, justice and consolidation of peace. We are confident that cooperation to this end will continue.

Over the medium-term, the major challenge to our country is the struggle to overcome poverty. The goal for the coming years is to reduce dire poverty by 50 per cent — that is, to reduce the figure of those living in poverty from 19.5 per cent to 10 per cent by the year 2000. This is being accomplished by means of a coordinated, innovative social policy strategy which, in the context of gradual institutional changes, sets aside the State as the sole centralizing entity. All actions must be taken in conjunction with a consistent economic policy,

a programme aimed at transforming the productive apparatus, and the participation of society.

We are trying to promote an increase in production, generate employment and develop social programmes that meet the needs of the poorer segment of society. To this end, starting in 1995, the Government of Peru will allocate at least 40 per cent of the national budget to social expenditures — that is to say, 200 per cent more than what was agreed in Copenhagen.

At the same time, the plan to combat poverty — a significant step in the implementation of the agreements reached at the Social Summit — is envisaged as including 12 regional programmes, which will be developed on the basis of national concerns and criteria and of local priorities. The design of each of these programmes will be based on a characterization that includes socio-economic information, the identification of projects, urgent needs, and the productive or resource potential of each region.

Concomitantly, a programme of basic social expenditures is being developed that will improve the quality of social services. It covers four general areas: basic education, basic health, food supplements for at-risk groups, and basic justice. We believe that the struggle against poverty calls for more effective social spending, and, to this end, we are improving the manner in which we allocate, implement, control and monitor such expenditures.

My country, which is committed to generating genuine conditions for the integrated development of persons, families and communities through economic and social stability and peace, is tackling the Copenhagen commitments with enthusiasm and in a spirit of long-term commitment.

Mr. Wisnumurti (Indonesia): At the outset I should like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his informative and comprehensive report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. We have found the report to be most useful in these deliberations and in providing a good indication of the activities that have been undertaken thus far by the United Nations, as well as those in progress.

I should like to begin by reaffirming Indonesia's commitment to the goals and aspirations that were expressed at the World Summit for Social Development and its undertaking to actively follow up the outcome. The Declaration and Programme of Action adopted on that momentous occasion provide the international community with a pragmatic and viable framework for advancing the social development and well-being of all people, and thereby moving closer to realizing those ideals set out in the Charter of the United Nations.

As the international community recently had occasion to reflect on the progress that has been made during the Organization's first half-century of promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, the serious obstacles that continue to confront humankind were also readily apparent. The socio-economic gains that have been made over the past years have yet to affect significantly the daily lives of many millions of men, women and children. Today, over one billion people — approximately 20 per cent of the world population — live in poverty and in unacceptable conditions. That number continues to rise as the gap between rich and poor nations continues to widen. At the same time, inadequate housing and rapid urbanization persist, and, despite the truly remarkable advances that have been made in science and technology, hunger and malnutrition remain a constant threat for many.

In this context, we believe that the Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development reflects the determination of the international community to address the problem of poverty, the realization of which requires cooperation between the developed and developing countries and the display of their political will to proceed with follow-up activities in the spirit of partnership. The momentum generated and the opportunities presented at the World Summit should not pass without any concerted action.

It is my delegation's view that the implementation of the Programme of Action, as it currently stands, requires two basic approaches: mustering the necessary financial resources and revitalizing institutional structures to monitor, review and assess the implementation of the Programme of Action.

While we concur with the view that the implementation of the Programme of Action is the primary responsibility of each Government, no one would deny that the developing countries will encounter many difficulties in reallocating already overstretched budgets to finance follow-up activities. The external debt problem of the developing countries and the declining tendency in official development assistance are among the obstacles that will be encountered by the developing countries as

they seek to implement the Programme of Action. These should not be interpreted as an excuse by the developing countries not to implement the World Summit outcome; rather they mean that the support of the developed countries is needed in that effort. In this respect, my delegation cannot but agree with the Secretary-General when he states in his report that the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action in the developing countries will require additional financial resources and more development cooperation.

Turning to the institutional aspect, we fully agree that strong institutional frameworks are required to monitor and to assess the implementation of the Programme of Action. Without strong institutional support, the international community might register little progress. With this in mind, we need to look into the mandates of the existing institutions, such as that of the Commission for Social Development, which is currently mandated to advise the Economic and Social Council on social policies of a general character, and in particular all matters in the social field not covered by the specialized intergovernmental agencies. The Programme of Action views social development from many aspects, such as economic growth, structural adjustment and equal opportunities. Such a cross-cutting approach certainly requires institutions that have cross-cutting mandates. My delegation therefore looks forward to reviewing the mandates of the existing institutions in order to bring them more into line with the Programme of Action.

I should like to stress, in this connection, that the review of the mandates should contribute to a coordinated effort by all the functional commissions in following up the programmes of action of the various international conferences. In this respect, we believe that the role of the Economic and Social Council as a coordinating body needs to be further strengthened.

Greater coordination is needed to improve the impact of social development programmes and to avoid redundancy, and to give a greater focus to development efforts and improve their effectiveness. The importance of the Economic and Social Council in providing overall guidance and overseeing the system-wide coordination of the Summit outcome should be stressed. Such close coordination among the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council will certainly have a positive impact on the activities of the funds and programmes of the United Nations system, which are working at the field level and closely interact with people. In this respect, my delegation would like to emphasize the need to strengthen United Nations operational activities for development. Therefore, we attach great importance to the ongoing deliberations on the review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199, which, *inter alia*, reviews the role of the resident coordinator system. We do hope that such a review will be directed towards a more strengthened and coordinated approach by the United Nations system in the implementation of the commitments agreed at the various international conferences, including the World Summit for Social Development.

While we focus our energy on the review of the mandates of the existing institutions in following up the Summit's commitments, this should not lead to inaction in other areas. Rather, it should strengthen our efforts so that we may work together hand in hand to fully implement the Programme of Action. In this respect, the Indonesian delegation considers that poverty alleviation is of the utmost importance for the international community to tackle, as poverty afflicts more than one billion people. Unless firm concerted efforts are taken by the international community, such a problem might constitute a threat to peace and international stability. In that connection, we welcome the decision to convene a special session of the Commission for Social Development in 1996. The Commission has a central role to play in providing information to the Economic and Social Council in its coordination activities and for assisting the international community in the elaboration of practical measures to implement follow-up activities. Since poverty is so pervasive, it is our view that the Commission should adopt the perspective on "the eradication of poverty" as the theme during its special session next year.

As a developing country, Indonesia is no stranger to human suffering and the despair that accompanies poverty and underdevelopment. As recently as 1970 approximately 60 per cent of our population lived below the poverty line. That level has been reduced to less than 15 per cent. Indonesia has recently embarked on its sixth Five-Year Development Plan, which is centred on poverty alleviation, with rapid and sustainable growth in labour-intensive sectors being a key element. Our programme for eradicating poverty has been successful as it promotes sustained self-reliance by enabling the regional and local levels to undertake and manage development projects consistent with their respective needs.

Indonesia also has convened a workshop attended by representatives from the Government and from non-governmental organizations, business circles, academia, our legislature and the mass media to identify and coordinate cross-sectoral development programmes that will be implemented in line with the World Summit Declaration and Programme of Action. And we are responding to the suggestion made by the Secretary-General to name a national focal point for follow-up activities. We concur with the assessment that such initiatives should play a role in maintaining the momentum that was generated last March in Copenhagen.

In concluding, I would like to express the sincere hope and expectation of the Indonesian delegation that the World Summit for Social Development will translate into a real improvement of global standards of living and reduction of poverty. This will require the United Nations development bodies and specialized agencies to lend their assistance to the developing countries as they implement the Programme of Action. All in the international community must continue to work to fulfil the commitments we made in Copenhagen, and thereby begin a new era of intertwined interests, of cooperation and of genuine partnership.

Mr. Fernandes (India): At the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, our leaders committed themselves to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world through decisive national actions and international cooperation as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind. At the international level, it was agreed to focus attention on and support the special needs of countries and regions in which there are substantial concentrations of people living in poverty and which, therefore, face serious difficulties in achieving social and economic development. The Summit reaffirmed the rights relating to education, food, shelter, employment, health and information, particularly in order to assist people living in poverty.

Mr. Ould Ely (Mauritania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

On the other two core issues identified for the Summit, our leaders committed themselves to promoting the goal of full employment and social integration.

The world today, everyone acknowledges, stands at the crossroads of history, even as it struggles to free itself from the attitudes and confines of the cold-war era. Certain paradigms of development that had placed the State alone at the centre have had to be reversed significantly. National rivalries and competition, often defined along ideological lines for more than four decades, are searching for new identities and motivation. The interest in the cause of development, often based in the past on the search for allies, is giving way to a questioning of the utility of international development cooperation. There is also a swing to the other side and a tendency to put an unfettered market system alone at the centre of the new scheme of things.

While this new enthusiasm is being promoted across the globe, practical experience is generating a search for and recourse to what my Prime Minister described in Copenhagen as a "market-plus" approach. Otherwise, the poor and the weak will suffer exclusion owing to the imperfections and the tyranny of the market.

To succeed, any approach must place the people at the centre. This centrality of people is extremely important. It was recognized in the Rio Declaration and reaffirmed and expanded on at Copenhagen. We have to empower the people themselves as the central strategy to social and economic development to sustain human progress. The effort must be to empower every disadvantaged class and group, indeed, every single disadvantaged person. This in turn would be possible only when certain rights fundamental to human development are guaranteed to people.

International cooperation remains in today's context essential to facilitate and accelerate national economic and social development. To begin with, all countries the world over are in need of social development and integration. The dominant cause for discord may be different in different countries, but no society can claim to be fully integrated. We have only to look around us to see the exclusion and marginalization experienced by significant sections of the population in developed countries, particularly as a result of human failings, imperfection of social organization, as well as the dictates of the market-based approach.

The core issues of poverty eradication, employment generation and social integration cannot be addressed credibly without adequate resources, non-discriminatory access to markets and the availability of modern technologies for invigorating economic and social progress. At the national level, countries have to commit the resources required to realize the rights of the people in terms of building of infrastructure, institution-building and institution-strengthening, and formulation of policies

and designing of strategies and mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation that permit substantial implementation.

The Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, mobilized the masses of India in our struggle for freedom. He inspired an impoverished nation to win freedom from the world's mightiest empire by non-violent means. As India struggles towards its second freedom, the freedom from want, disease and ignorance, we go back to Mahatma Gandhi and his technique of social mobilization of the people. Our strategy goes well beyond representative governance and endeavours to bring in more and more people's participation at the grass-roots level.

To this end, in the last couple of years we have amended our Constitution to provide for decentralized, participative, village- level democratic institutions with statutory representation for the socially disadvantaged groups of our people. One third of all elective representative posts at the local level have been reserved for women. We have resolved to make the concerns of gender and the rights of children, adolescents and youth the centre of all our decision-making, including economic decision-making.

In Copenhagen our leaders adopted a visionary document that incorporates major commitments for national action and international cooperation. It is essential that we put in place effective follow-up machinery to translate these commitments into action. The entire United Nations system should be involved in the follow-up process. My delegation favours a three-tiered structure for follow-up, involving the Commission for Social Development, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. A review meeting should be held in five years. The Bretton Woods institutions, the specialized agencies and, in particular, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) should be involved in a coordinated manner. We should look not only at the situation in developing countries, but also the societal problems of developed countries.

There is also a need to increase substantially the availability of resources for international cooperation for social development. It is particularly shocking, therefore, that soon after the adoption of these major commitments, we are faced with the prospect of incomplete replenishment of International Development Association 10 and uncertainty regarding International Development Association 11. Increased attention should be paid to the commitment made to facilitate increased transfers of real resources to the developing countries. The legitimate world-wide concern with social development ought not to degenerate simply into additional conditionalities imposed on developing countries from abroad. The agenda for social development cannot be viewed in isolation. The domestic resources needed for social development can be mobilized only if the economy is growing rapidly. A holistic approach has to be adopted in assessing the balance between expenditures on economic services and on social services.

For their part, the developing countries must, of course, increase the availability of domestic resources by reorienting public expenditures and minimizing waste. However, the central question relating to the overall limits of available resources cannot be ignored. At low per capita income levels, even with the best political will and expenditure policies, sufficient resources cannot be mobilized for the programmes outlined at the Summit. The onus, therefore, rests on the international community to generate a substantial increase in the flow of external resources for poverty eradication and social development.

I believe that in the post-cold-war era our countries, through the United Nations, have entered into a major compact for national economic and social development and for international cooperation to this end. This compact is embodied in the outcome of the series of world conferences held over the past five years. We now have to ensure an effective and coordinated follow-up to the commitments undertaken.

Mrs. Kaba (Côte d'Ivoire) *(interpretation from French):* The major world conferences organized by the United Nations in recent years have had development as their central theme. These conferences, while focusing on issues such as the environment, human rights, population, women and human settlements, have above all striven to promote development in its various aspects while emphasizing an approach based on the full flowering of the human being.

The World Summit for Social Development, which was a part of that trend, went a step further by defining more specifically the great problems of our societies that hamper the well-being of the individual and deny people's right to live in dignity. These ills are called poverty, unemployment and the marginalization of vulnerable populations.

In order to eliminate poverty, create jobs and guarantee social integration, the Copenhagen Programme of Action sets forth measures to promote a favourable

economic and political environment. The General Assembly, as the principal intergovernmental body, is called on to act as a catalyst in the international community's implementation of the Copenhagen commitments. We must therefore consider here concrete actions leading to the eradication of poverty and social injustice and the creation of jobs.

We must seek above all to be innovative in the area of international cooperation because the development strategies launched since the 1960s have not succeeded in reducing the gap between the rich countries and the developing countries. Quite the contrary: the gulf has widened, despite the series of development decades. Far from decreasing, poverty has grown to the point of being unbearable and now affects three out of four people in Africa. In addition to marginalization, the exclusion of poor countries from economic decision-making bodies makes the resumption of North-South dialogue difficult.

The creation of an economic and political environment conducive to social development presupposes, in addition to the maintenance or establishment of peace, the promotion of a suitable juridical and political framework so that all a country's citizens can participate in its development. Commendable efforts are being made by African countries to establish a favourable democratic climate for the participation of all. Despite an unprecedented economic crisis, Africa has responded to the demands of the international community by implementing development strategies and structural-adjustment programmes. However, we are still awaiting the emergences of a spirit of partnership based on mutual respect, shared responsibilities and reciprocal advantages.

The failure of current approaches is obvious. We must raise the awareness of donors, encourage them to act, support the work of development agencies and stir international financial institutions to combat poverty, hunger and destitution.

Our Assembly must examine the possibility of bringing about the creation of an international safety net designed to improve resource flows to the developing countries by increasing official development assistance to attain the goal of 0.7 per cent of gross national product; to take urgent measures to cancel or convert the debts of the poor countries in order to finance social programmes; to adapt structural-adjustment programmes to pressing social needs in order to reduce the negative impact of these programmes on social development; and to create conditions conducive to mutually beneficial trade.

These measures will make it possible to mobilize additional resources to finance education, health, housing, sanitation and food programmes and job creation.

The foreign-debt burden of African countries is a major obstacle to the continent's social development. From a total of $48.5 billion in 1978, Africa's foreign debt mushroomed to $297 billion in 1993, which is almost equivalent to the gross domestic product of the entire continent. Côte d'Ivoire, for example, spends 10 times as much on debt servicing as it invests in public health.

Hence, we need to provide our Organization with new guidelines to strengthen international cooperation and revive North-South dialogue in order to promote the economic and social development of the poor countries. Serious consideration should be given to cancelling or relieving their foreign debt. The strategies established by the World Bank to eradicate poverty by facilitating access to credit and the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises are encouraging. However, we are waiting impatiently for measures to defer the debt of Sub-Saharan African countries. United Nations Development Programme initiatives to reduce poverty, in particular in rural areas, deserve our support. The fight against poverty must be a priority in the work of development agencies during the United Nations decade for the eradication of poverty.

My delegation has studied carefully the proposal of Denmark to establish an independent forum on social development. We hope that the forum will serve to maintain the momentum of the Social Summit and to continue the consideration of social policies and analyses in respect of selected countries. My delegation would like to have more information about the forum, but we do have reservations with regard to any initiative that would diminish our Assembly's central role as a catalyst for world social-development policies. We think that the Commission for Social Development should be strengthened, as provided for in the Copenhagen Programme of Action. My delegation supports the idea of setting up a social-development fund that would finance programmes and projects and would encourage exchanges of information on the follow-up to the Social Summit.

In conclusion, I wish to appeal to our Assembly to encourage manifestations of real political will on the part of Governments to abide by their commitments. Without this political will, any seminars, deliberations, studies or

strategies would be in vain. It is time for action because we have already said all there is to say, while destitution and hunger continue to claim victims.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): I have the honour to speak on the agenda item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development".

One need not stress, at this stage of the debate, the centrality of the issue of development among the objectives enshrined in the United Nations Charter, especially not after the series of so-called global conferences which started with the World Summit for Children in 1990. Among them, the World Summit for Social Development stands as a milestone. I want to join in the well-deserved applause for Ambassador Somavía, who was the very soul of that Summit. The international community, at the highest level, gathered in Copenhagen and committed itself to the promotion of social development by addressing 10 related issues: an enabling environment for social development; poverty; unemployment; social integration; the situation of women; education and health; the situation of Africa and the least developed countries; social aspects of structural adjustment; resources for social development; and a framework for international cooperation for social development.

Neither the Social Summit, however, nor the other conferences, among them the forthcoming Habitat II, should be seen as isolated events or special occasions for the international community to reiterate commitments to the well-being of people. They have to be seen globally as part of a concerted effort to upgrade the treatment of the issue of development within the United Nations. As important as these impressive demonstrations of support for the social cause is the daily practice of our work here and our capacity to turn these declarations of principles into concrete action. For this reason, the Brazilian Government welcomes the opportunity to discuss follow-up strategies derived from the Copenhagen conference. We are convinced that what we have achieved until now, as spelt out in the various documents agreed upon in recent global conferences, constitutes a valuable basis for action.

The Brazilian Government attaches the highest priority to the promotion of economic and social development. Central among the many actions taken in the social sphere in Brazil is the recent creation of the Solidarity Community Programme, which seeks to coordinate efforts in the governmental area for the eradication of absolute poverty in collaboration with civil society. The actions within the Programme are divided into five categories — food and nutrition, basic urban services, rural development, income and job creation and protection of social welfare and rights — which encompass 14 specific programmes, to which $4 billion of the 1995 federal budget was allocated.

The Solidarity Community Programme should be understood within the context of other goals of our Government in the political and economic fields, such as the strengthening of democracy, the maintenance of economic stability, the promotion of sustainable development and the reform of the State. Particular attention should be given, in this respect, to the economic stabilization plan, the "Plano Real", an example of macroeconomic adjustment undertaken against the background of social priorities. After a year and a half of economic stabilization, the necessary conditions for economic and social development were in place. By eliminating the corrosive effect of inflation, an estimated $15 billion was transferred to the poorest segments of our society.

The question of development must be addressed in an integrated way. We are deeply convinced that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action have embodied this comprehensive view of economic, social and environmental issues, in particular in Commitment 8, which stresses the necessity of taking into account social goals within structural-adjustment programmes. Hence, for the Brazilian delegation it is essential that issues such as investment, trade and financial flows, among others, be discussed at the United Nations. The Bretton Woods institutions, in turn, should lay stronger emphasis on the social dimension of structural-adjustment programmes. This complex reality makes it clear that closer cooperation between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions is absolutely necessary.

In the Fifth Committee, my delegation has already addressed the issue of resources. There we indicated our concern at the groupings of the priority areas of the medium-term plan with regard to resolutions and mandates already agreed upon. The grouping of four very important rubrics under a single title relating to the enhancement of international and regional cooperation for development raises some doubt as to the priority being given to the promotion of development, which must remain a cornerstone of this Organization. While we very much support the efforts undertaken to streamline the

work of the Organization and sharpen its focus, we firmly believe that this cannot be done at the expense of the mandated activities and programmes agreed upon at the highest level.

As far as coordination is concerned, my delegation wishes to emphasize the need to ensure consistency of approach among the multisectoral strategies being pursued by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and others. In this respect, our ongoing deliberations should concentrate on an appraisal of any existing coordinating arrangements and on a set of proposals on means to enhance interlinkages.

In conclusion, my delegation is convinced that, without prejudice to specific action on critical areas — such as poverty, children and women — only a comprehensive approach to the question of development, which must encompass the concerted efforts of different international institutions, can provide definite responses to social challenges. We are deeply committed to this approach, both in policies being carried out in Brazil and in our participation in international forums.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): At the outset, we would like to welcome the inclusion of the item on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development in the agenda of this anniversary session of the General Assembly. My delegation takes this opportunity to thank the Government of Denmark for successfully hosting the Summit and for its commendable efforts to follow up on the outcome.

The World Summit for Social Development, held this past March in Copenhagen, was a timely and important opportunity to address the social and economic issues that have gained marked prominence on the global agenda, particularly in the post-cold-war period. It was at this historic meeting that the international community articulated a renewed commitment and resolve to secure the well-being and social progress of humanity for the twenty-first century. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ambassador Juan Somavía for his important work as the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Copenhagen Summit.

My delegation is confident that the Summit Declaration and Programme of Action, which were adopted through the concerted and untiring efforts of the participants, will contribute to the ongoing process to create an international society capable of meeting the challenges of the new era and to define our common goals for the prosperity of the next generation. In this context, my delegation reiterates its support for the decision to hold a special session in the year 2000 for an overall review and appraisal of the outcome of the Summit.

Considering the multiple tasks enumerated in the Declaration and the Programme of Action, it may be appropriate for each Government to identify and prioritize its own strategic goals within the framework of these documents. However, my delegation is convinced that those goals should be pursued in a comprehensive manner, integrating a variety of dimensions, such as environmental, human rights and gender issues. In this regard, my delegation hopes that the social development perspectives of the major international conferences that have taken place in recent years in Rio, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing will be duly incorporated in the follow-up measures.

Moreover, the implementation should comprise a number of elements of economic development and social progress, while respecting the diversity of the social, traditional and cultural conditions of the respective country. To that end, the coordinating role of the United Nations is a prerequisite for ensuring the coherence of the activities of all the actors involved in the promotion of international cooperation for social development. More than ever, the promotion and strengthening of the coordination of the United Nations system with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, at all levels, are necessary for global development programmes.

It is clear that the main responsibility for social development rests with the national Governments. However, international cooperation and assistance are needed to bolster the efforts of the developing countries, especially the economic, social and human resources development of Africa and the least developed countries. As the Secretary-General emphasizes in his report in document A/50/670, the situation of the least developed countries should be fully taken into account in the follow-up to the Summit. These countries will require additional financial resources, more effective development cooperation and the assistance of the international community.

As President Kim of the Republic of Korea pointed out during the Social Summit in Copenhagen, expanding trade and investment alone will hardly be sufficient to resolve the pressing issues affecting the developing countries. It is imperative that more efficient support and cooperation be provided to the development programmes of developing countries. Furthermore, my delegation is convinced that the assistance provided by developed countries will contribute to the socio-economic development of the world as a whole and ultimately benefit the donors themselves.

To follow up on the announcement made by my President at the World Summit for Social Development, my Government is drawing up a master plan not only to expand the scope of our public development support, matching the level of Korea's economic capability, but also to provide technical training for more than 30,000 people from fellow developing countries by the year 2010.

One of the critical areas of concern requiring concerted international efforts is the eradication of poverty. Considering that poverty persists as one of the most serious obstacles to development efforts, my delegation would like to stress the vital importance of enhancing cooperation between developed countries and international financial organizations to eliminate the threat of poverty in developing countries, especially the least developed ones. In this context, it is timely and appropriate that 1996 has been declared the first year of the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty.

Given that women in developing countries are the primary victims of discrimination and social injustice, we must place special emphasis on them in our global social development efforts. Sustainable development can be achieved only by establishing gender equality in all facets of development. Equal rights and opportunities for women in the areas of education, health and family planning are preconditions for genuine development. Moreover, existing social institutions that perpetuate gender discrimination should be rectified. For that reason, the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women should be adequately reflected in the programmes for global social development.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year. Recognizing the vast potential of youth the world over, and as its first follow-up measure to the World Summit for Social Development, the Korean Government hosted, with the cooperation of the United Nations, the World Youth Leaders Conference in Seoul in May 1995. Under the theme of "The Role of the New Generation in the Age of Globalization", this three-day Conference, which was attended by representatives from 64 countries, discussed a variety of issues involving the role of youth for the betterment of the future. The outcome of the Conference was distributed as an official document of the General Assembly (A/50/454).

As the Secretary-General stated in his message to the Conference, in order to prepare for the twenty-first century it is essential that young people be empowered to utilize their freedom, energy and talents to create a world of tolerance, mutual respect and a sense of shared human venture. My delegation hopes that this initiative of the Korean Government will give a new impetus to worldwide youth policies and programmes.

Both the Copenhagen Summit and the Beijing Conference highlighted the role that civil society can play in the critical follow-up stage of the global conferences. The contributions of civil society, which includes non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the mass media, have proved to be very important throughout the preparatory and follow-up processes. In this regard, my delegation welcomed the seminar on the involvement of civil society in the follow-up to the Social Summit. This seminar was held in June 1995 and was hosted by the secretariat of the World Summit for Social Development. My delegation believes that greater attention should be given to the contributions of civil society, not just as valuable partners but as indispensable actors in implementing the outcome of these global conferences.

Finally, my delegation would like to stress that, in our pursuit of development, human-centred development is a top priority. Indeed, as the Social Summit's Programme of Action proclaims, only through investment in people and their well-being will the objectives of social development be achieved. Indeed, it is my delegation's firm belief that human-centred development will have a far greater and more lasting effect in achieving stability and prosperity all round the globe.

In this regard, my delegation would like to emphasize the importance of the democratic participation of all actors in society, the protection of fundamental human rights and the promotion of social welfare and equality as the basis of our continuing endeavour in implementing the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development.

Ms. Arystanbekova (Kazakstan): It is an honour for me to address this plenary meeting on agenda item 161, "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development".

The delegation of Kazakstan fully supports the decision of the General Assembly that matters pertaining to the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit should be dealt with by the Assembly in plenary meeting this year. In our view, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is an excellent opportunity for the Organization to comprehensively analyse its activities in a sphere of such extreme importance.

The World Summit for Social Development, which took place in Copenhagen this March, followed a series of important United Nations international conferences: the Rio Conference on Environment and Development; the World Conference on Human Rights, which was held in Vienna; the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development; and the World Conference on Women, which took place in Beijing. All these global events, which were held not long ago, re-emphasized the strong determination of the international community to fully implement its goals in the sphere of social and economic development. They also emphasized the need to approach the follow-up to the United Nations conferences in an integrated manner.

The World Summit for Social Development became another important milestone in the history of the world community. It defined and outlined the aims and purposes of further international cooperation in the solution of the three key issues — poverty, unemployment and social disintegration, which have been defined by the United Nations as the most pressing problems of modern society.

The delegation of Kazakstan fully supports the following idea expressed by the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his report "Implementation of the Outcome of the World Summit for Social Development":

> "The follow-up and implementation of the decisions and recommendations adopted by the Social Summit are particularly challenging owing to the complex and interconnected nature of the issues and the commitments made." (*A/50/670, para. 3*)

We also share the Secretary-General's view that

> "The reduction and elimination of poverty, the promotion of productive employment, the creation of socially integrated societies and the creation of a political and economic environment supportive of those goals entail a vast array of policies and actions". (*ibid.*)

We think that a top-priority task of the international community today is to mobilize efforts at the national, regional and global levels, under the auspices of the United Nations, to comprehensively implement the proposals that emerged from the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development. In this context, we agree with the Secretary-General that the main responsibility for the implementation of those proposals rests on national Governments.

I should like to remind representatives that on 29 March 1995 the Secretary-General sent to Heads of State and Government a letter in which he stressed the political significance of the World Summit for Social Development and of the commitments undertaken there. In his response, the President of the Republic of Kazakstan, Nursultan Nazarbaev, emphasized the determination of the Government of the Republic to foster social development and to implement the objectives and commitments adopted by the Social Summit. His letter says:

> "I ... fully share your views regarding the need for the practical implementation of the Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen.
>
> "I should like to emphasize that the results of the Copenhagen meeting have provided the basis for the social policy of our State for the next few years and for the long term."

In this regard, it may be noted that the activities of Kazakstan are strategically directed towards the solution of social problems that are particularly urgent and significant at this stage in the country's transition.

In the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakstan, adopted by referendum in August 1995, Kazakstan affirms that it is a democratic, secular, social State, which accepts the rule of law and whose highest values are human beings and their lives.

In my country, national legislation establishes the forms of social assistance extended to the poorer sections of the population. About 5 million people are covered by social services. By a decree of the President, regional charitable funds have been established for the purpose of improving the social welfare services targeted on needy and disabled citizens. By a decision of the Government, the social doctrine of the Republic of Kazakstan is being worked out. This will reinforce State regulation of the social system. With the coming qualitative changes in the economy, reduced inflation will strengthen the social services provided for the population and will increase the purchasing power of social benefits.

Questions relating to social services for the unemployed are decided on the basis of employment programmes worked out at both national and regional levels. At present, and for the short term, social strategy is directed towards providing pensioners, the disabled, large families and single mothers, students, orphans and other categories of citizens social guarantees on the basis of a variable minimum wage.

Today Kazakstan is continuing to cooperate with the international organizations in the social and economic fields. In May 1995 the World Bank approved a social protection project in the Republic of Kazakstan. This project would strengthen the institutional capacity of the employment service to register the unemployed and calculate and pay unemployment benefits, to provide a more effective service to unemployed job-seekers, to analyse labour markets and to formulate labour market policies. It would also develop a sharper focus for training and retraining of the unemployed, particularly women and youth. In this regard, it may be mentioned that the social protection project is the first project in the social sphere among the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The discussion and adoption of the project aroused great interest among the States members of the Commonwealth and the eastern European countries. If this project in Kazakstan is successful, the World Bank hopes to use analogous schemes in other countries in transition.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations was marked by a forum of extreme importance in the history of the international community — the World Summit for Social Development. That global event, its principles and its goals, has imposed a great task on us, that of effectively working together, hand in hand, to overcome global challenges. In this regard, I should like again to emphasize that the Government of the Republic of Kazakstan will continue to take all the necessary steps fully to implement the important decisions of the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development.

Mr. Yoogalingam (Malaysia): It is over eight months since our leaders met at Copenhagen and forged a universal commitment to a political, economic, ethical and spiritual vision for social development. This was to be based on the value of and respect for the human person, taking into account the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of all peoples. The Copenhagen Declaration, as well as the Programme of Action, embodies this fundamental compact, spanning issues relating to poverty eradication, productive employment and social integration.

It is now our task here at this session to implement and follow up on what our leaders agreed to at Copenhagen. In our task, we should never forget the centrality of people in development in the pursuit of social justice, solidarity, harmony and equality among people and Member States. The international community must continue to advance the genuine cause of pluralism and responsible economic and social development.

We have already moved from Vienna to Rio to Cairo to Copenhagen to Beijing, articulating with lofty intentions global programmes of action to improve the human condition and the state of the world, but we have never satisfactorily made available the means to implement our intentions. We seem to be at our best in rhetoric, never wanting to distinguish, or seemingly unable to distinguish, between short-sighted self-interest and the care and well-being of our peoples and the world. The affluent must practise a culture of commitment and fulfil the obligations agreed to at all these global conferences. At the same time, developing countries are honour bound to promote national economic and social development designed to alleviate, if not eradicate, poverty.

It is untenable that 1.3 billion people should continue to live in abject poverty in the world today. We should collectively strive towards an action programme that would seek to ensure that poverty eradication is not solely indicator-driven. Each individual, and in particular the world's poor, should be guaranteed a minimum level of sustenance, measured not only in terms of dollars, but in terms of calorie intake. The intention is not to advocate the concept of a welfare State, but to identify tangible ways and means to break the back of abject poverty.

The entire international strategy for addressing poverty eradication remains ad hoc. If, indeed, poverty eradication is the central issue of our time, the international community must concretize specific actions designed to address the problem. The resources and the institutional framework must be in place to address this issue.

My delegation fully agrees with the emerging consensus here on the three themes in addressing the issue of poverty eradication. The themes are, first, the formulation of an integrated strategy; secondly, meeting the basic human needs of all; and, thirdly, the promotion of self-reliance and community-based initiatives. They give us a sound basis to start our work immediately.

My delegation, however, would also wish to underline the importance of social integration. The security of the human person demands a comprehensive and mutually reinforcing approach, which should be free from narrow political agendas. Human rights issues should not become the sole criteria for social integration. The external pressures involving the human person, which ignore internal and local dynamics, are bound to be unsustainable. Age-old cultures, the mores and values of the people, need to be taken fully into account.

In identifying and agreeing to the priorities for the implementation of the Programme of Action at the global level, due consideration should be given to the vast differences in the level of development, from the least developed to the highly industrialized Member States, as well as to Member States whose economies are in transition. In our consultations we should be mindful that the priorities and proposed measures to implement the Programme may not be appropriate to all Member States, and we should never forget that at the end of the day the primary responsibility for implementing the World Summit's agreed goals falls on individual Member States and must be facilitated by a conducive external economic environment.

We welcome the initiatives of the international financial institutions to continue to find ways to alleviate the debt problem of the developing countries created by an increase in net flows of private debt, the effects of cross-currency valuation and rescheduled interest payments. The impact of these factors on the economic and social development of developing countries need not be tabulated here, for we are all acutely aware of them. The Naples Terms, initiated by the Paris Club, represent a debt-rescheduling module for low-income countries that could be further widened to alleviate the debt burden of developing States and let them focus on the eradication of poverty through people-centred sustainable-development programmes, which must be workable.

As for the institutional follow-up, the United Nations system has a catalytic role to play in the implementation of this Programme. We agree that the General Assembly should concentrate on formulating policies *vis-à-vis* its implementation, and that the Economic and Social Council should provide the overall guidance and coordination within the United Nations system. The move by the Council to have a review of cross-cutting themes common to the major international conferences organized by the United Nations is both timely and necessary. We should avoid duplication and ensure that maximum resources are devoted to the recipients rather than to underwriting a maze of institutional arrangements.

The proposal of the Economic and Social Council to organize several meetings to address specific issues with the chairpersons and secretariats of the functional commissions may be a step in the right direction, towards identifying and focusing on the priority areas. However, we urge that these meetings not get embroiled in procedural matters but rather focus on workable programmes of action and appropriate deployment of resources. We also welcome the decision of the Commission for Social Development to open its debates to experts and main actors of civil society to gain their views and their input on how best to enhance cooperation between and the participation of the private and the public sectors in developing and implementing social development programmes.

We support the proposal to consider this item every year until the year 2000, when a special session would be held for an overall review and appraisal of the programmes undertaken. However, the proposed convening of a high-level meeting in 1997 might again divert human and financial resources to preparations for that meeting rather than focusing on implementation. Progress will already be monitored by the Economic and Social Council, the Commission for Social Development and the General Assembly itself. What we need for the annual consideration of the General Assembly is an integrated annual summary report and a comprehensive report on the outcome of the implementation of the World Summit for Social Development for the year 2000 only.

My delegation is of the view that we should not overreach ourselves in the first year, but should approach the matter incrementally on a country-by-country and project-by-project basis, with the initial focus on the eradication of poverty and building national capacity.

Mr. Butler (Australia): As many before me have observed, the Summit at Copenhagen was the largest meeting of its kind ever held. That was not the result of an accident or of some reason incidental to the state of affairs of humankind today. That largest summit ever held — that is, until the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations — saw a political commitment made at Copenhagen to action on social development, and it showed how far the world has come towards giving priority to the well-being of people and to their central, basic needs. In substance, the Summit showed that a more integrated and determined effort will be required if the objectives of enhancing social development and ensuring human well-being are to be achieved.

Copenhagen, as we all know, had three core themes: the eradication of poverty, the provision of employment and the fostering of social integration. It underlined that these three core issues are of the greatest intrinsic importance to an overwhelming number of the world's people. Heads of State or Government gathered at Copenhagen responded to this fact by recognizing consensually that action on these three core issues should be amongst the overriding goals of the international community.

In the 10 Commitments made by Heads of State or Government in Copenhagen we saw just how comprehensive our implementation of action on those three core themes must be in order to ensure social development and social justice for all.

We are almost at the end of a chain of important and major international conferences held by the United Nations since 1991 in the fields of economic and social development. Each of those conferences had its own thematic unity. The last of them is to come next June, with the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, to be held in Istanbul.

All of them require effective follow-up and implementation of their results. This must be done in a way that links the outcomes of each and that contributes to the building of an integrated framework for a global partnership for development. At the intergovernmental level, this means harmonizing the agendas and work programmes of the functional commissions that will follow up the conferences, and promoting at the same time a clear division of labour amongst them. It means strengthening the role and the structures, the resources and the processes of the Economic and Social Council to promote such coordination and to review the implementation of the decisions taken at the Copenhagen Summit. In this context, we fully endorse the agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council on follow-up and implementation of the results of these major international conferences.

At the operational level, this means enhancing inter-agency coordination, including by the Administrative Committee on Coordination and through the use of inter-agency task forces, to ensure coordinated efforts by agencies. It also means securing the active participation of the funds, the programmes and the relevant specialized agencies, as well as of non-governmental organizations and relevant elements of civil society.

In this context, we welcome the establishment by the Secretary-General of task forces for the follow-up of the Summit and other related United Nations conferences, and the agreement by the World Bank and the International Labour Organization to serve as lead agencies. We also welcome the direction given by Executive Heads that the gender dimension should be taken fully into account in the work of all of the task forces to follow up the major conferences.

The World Summit for Social Development recognized the importance of the full participation of all in the achievement of social progress, justice and the betterment of the human condition. We would encourage, therefore, the widest implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action, including by public and private institutions and organizations. Just as the preparatory process for the Summit garnered massive contributions and support from non-governmental organizations and actors from civil society, we urge the United Nations to harness their commitment and their enthusiasm in the work of following up upon the Summit.

The Economic and Social Council working group on non-governmental organizations will continue to deliberate on the arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations next year. We hope that the Commission for Social Development, which will be designated as having a central role in reviewing Summit outcomes, will also give consideration to the modalities

for facilitating the involvement of non-governmental organizations and civil society in the work of the Commission.

In addition, we consider the Commission's work would be greatly enhanced by the opening of its debates to experts and main actors of civil society in the field of social development. This would stimulate real and substantial dialogue on issues of central importance. It would also enable the Commission to begin to formulate relevant guidance on actions to be taken to implement the outcomes of the Summit, at both the operational and the intergovernmental levels.

We look forward to the review next year of the Commission's mandate, agenda and work practices. While we expect the future activities of the Commission will continue to rely upon its comparative advantages in the overall structure of intergovernmental bodies — one of which is its capacity to consider issues pertaining to social integration — we also expect that it will pay attention to universal issues, in particular, to the gender issue.

Other Commissions, with their respective mandates, will also need to follow up on the Summit.

The strengthening of the role of the Economic and Social Council in overseeing system-wide coordination, of course, remains of paramount importance. In this context, the Council should ensure the implementation and integration of the outcomes of the Summit into the work of the funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations.

The widest possible implementation of the Summit Declaration and Programme of Action must also involve the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as the means of monitoring those aspects of the Declaration and Programme of Action which relate to compliance by States parties with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Universal ratification of the Covenant would also enhance the effective implementation of the Summit, and we very strongly encourage this.

What happened at Copenhagen was an event of profound importance. It is now our task to implement it, showing full respect for the importance of its content to the people of this world and to the unique political commitment given at the Conference at Copenhagen.

Programme of work

The President: I should like to make an announcement concerning agenda item 45, "The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development".

Contrary to the announcement made at yesterday's meeting, action on draft resolution A/50/L.17/Rev.1, submitted under this agenda item, will be taken at a later date, to give the Fifth Committee more time to review the programme budget implications of the draft resolution.

I should like to inform members that reports of the First Committee will now be taken up on Tuesday, 12 December 1995, in the afternoon, rather than on Wednesday, 13 December, as originally scheduled.

Announcement

The President: I should also like to make an announcement concerning agenda item 24, "Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s".

I wish to inform members that I have appointed His Excellency Mr. Alex Reyn, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, to be the coordinator of the informal consultations on draft resolution A/50/L.40, submitted under this agenda item.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.